Vol. 3, No. 2 January 9, 1978

Salt Cay, Turks Island

We came in here last night to explore the rumor of an old whaling station here only to find this morning that it is impossible to clear customs. We cannot go ashore without first visiting Grand Turk for which we do not have time. Both crew and local inhabitants are disappointed. Instead, we head for Sand Cay to the south where we hear whales are often found, keeping to the shallows around that deserted island much as they do off the banks.

This week has been a very productive one. A survey of both Silver and Navidad shows that a large number of whales has arrived. Navidad interestingly had a higher density than Silver; Mouchoir had none. No calves yet; the whales are in pairs or threes, usually but some larger groups are still to be found.

We spent most of Saturday following them about the western edge of Silver Bank photographing their antics and observing behavior. Flippering, lobtailing, and breaching were all clearly observed.

There are lots of songs now, too, — some very loud, others further off. We have been able to get clear recordings with which to compare last year's.

Clearly, all is going well scientifically as the weather has given us several days of fine sailing to delight the devoted sailors in our excellent ship's company.

Sincerely,

George Nichols
Master, r/v Regina Maris

The Ocean Research and Education Society, 51 Commercial Wharf, Boston, Mass 02110

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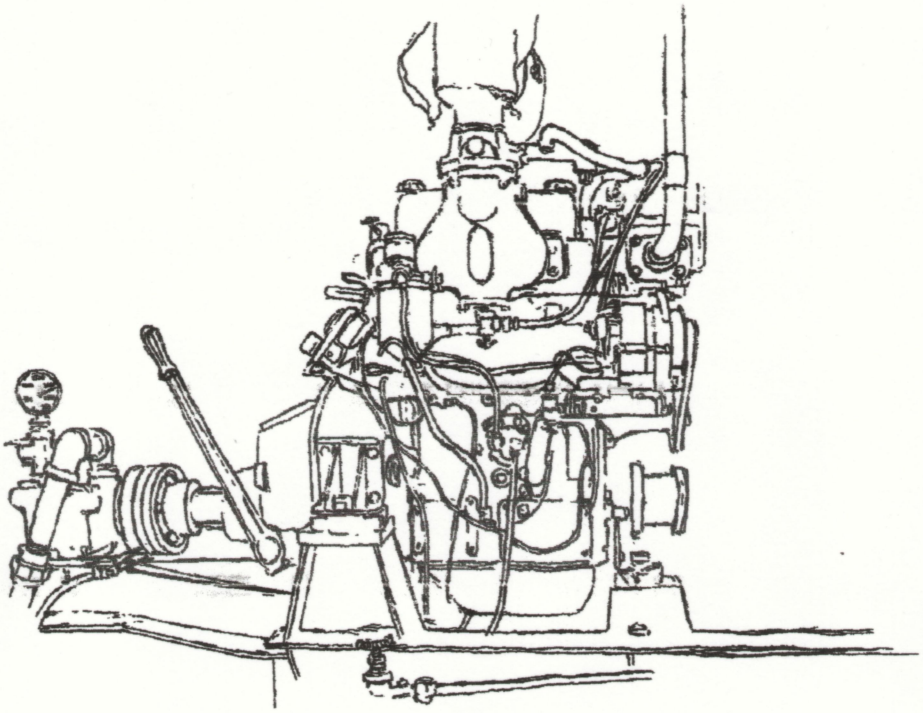

Drawing by David Omar White

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